



South Cumbria Mental Health Forum

*Speaking up for the
Mental Health Community*



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Join the Forum

Becoming a member is free, and you will receive regular updates on forum activities via our website and our regular newsletters. You will also receive invitations to our bi-monthly forum meetings, where you can come along to discuss any issues you may have regarding local service provision.

Contact your local development worker to find out more...

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NEWSLETTER

January 2008

Ward 4 Re-opened

Kentmere ward (Ward 4) has re-opened. The ward has been closed since July because of a problem in recruiting enough doctors to look after acutely ill patients out-of-hours.

The refurbished ward will be for the majority of South Lakes service users who need to go to hospital. If someone is acutely ill they may still have to go to Barrow; at any one time that is likely to be one or two people.

The Forum is aware that many people are concerned about travel from the east part of South Cumbria to Barrow. We have raised this strongly with the Partnership Trust, and they have made a commitment to find ways of helping in the new year.

In Barrow, Beckside Ward will be the place for those patients from both Barrow and Kendal who are acutely ill. Both Manor and Kentmere wards will serve the less acutely ill in their respective areas. While Kentmere ward has been closed, a number of improvements have been made, making use of the space provided by the reduction to 10 beds — including redecoration, and refurbishment of the activity room.



Patients Rep Dave Chase with Ward Staff in the new activity room

www.scmhforum.org.uk

HAPPY NEW YEAR!



Welcome to our first newsletter of 2008.

It is an exciting year for the Forum as we are proud to announce that our website is now live!

You can now find out all about the work of the forum, upcoming events and news stories online.

The site will be regularly updated to give you the local news about major issues in mental health.

Visit us online!

www.scmhforum.org.uk

Future of Forum agreed

With the backing of our South Cumbria Forum, Cumbria Mental Health Group has got a commitment from Cumbria Social Care and Cumbria PCT for financial support to develop User and Carer Forums all across Cumbria. The Cumbria Partnership Trust is committed to working with us too.

The support is for further independent community groups like ours to be established. These forums will be locally-based, serving Barrow and Furness, Kendal and South Lakes, Penrith and Eden, Carlisle, and Whitehaven, Workington and west Cumbria. Drawing on local knowledge and opinion, these democratic forums will contribute to the reshaping of mental health services for the future — both locally, and by sending delegates to a county-wide strategic group.

As well as being committed to maintaining the organisation we already have in South Cumbria, the Forum's Executive team has agreed to look at developing us into a charity to support the whole of Cumbria.

In the past, our Forum's successes have often come from developing a robust approach to NHS directors. Our existing relationships with managers will, under the new working arrangements, allow us to speak powerfully at county level. And now that the future is clear, we will search for voluntary sector funding for further development

As things develop we will keep you informed: you will be able to make decisions about the future of the Forum. If you have any views now, please let us know.

dates to remember

Janice O'Hare & Pete Sexton Tuesday 29th January 4:30-6pm

To tell us about changes in local services and answer questions

St Matthew's, Highfield Road Community Rooms

Opposite Cemetery Gates

South Lakes Forum Monday 11th February

Carers 11-12:30 pm; lunch; informal speaker 1-1:30pm; Service Users 1:30 - 3:00pm

Deaf Centre, Castle Street, Kendal

Furness Forum Monday 10th March

Carers 11-12:30 pm; lunch; informal speaker 1 - 1:30pm; Service Users 1:30 - 3:00pm

Disability Centre, School Street, Barrow

Don't Quit

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will.

When the road you're trudging seems all up hill.

When the funds are low and the debts are high.

And you want to smile, but you have to sigh

When care is pressing you down a bit.

Rest if you must, but don't you quit.

Life is queer with its twists and turns,

As everyone of us sometimes learns,

And many a failure turns about

When he might have won if he stuck it out;

Don't give up though the pace seems slow—

You may succeed with another blow.

Success is failure turned inside out—

The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,

And you can never tell how close you are,

It may be near when it seems so far;

So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit—

It's when things seem worst that you must not quit.

Poem contributed by Ged Egan.

Pathways to Recovery: Social Inclusion and Mental Health



Lucy Crispin and Victoria Dean talking to Richard Parry, head of Disability Services for Cumbria Social Care, at the Social Inclusion Conference which took place at the Rheged centre on 16 November 2007. They are in front of our stand at the exhibition.

At the conference, Cumbria Social Care and NHS Trusts Directors laid out how services users will be helped to recover in the future.

Jill Stannard, Director of Adult Social Care for Cumbria County Council, said that “it is possible to live well despite any limitations caused by disability or illness”; and this emphasis on hope was reflected in the presentations by the other managers. Jill also asked: “how do we make our organisations into ones that spread health and creativity?”. She stressed that service users had the right to inclusion in their care-planning, to being thoroughly informed, and to high quality care. She also emphasised that service users have the right to remain in control, and to be acknowledged as experts.

All speakers and service providers agreed that services should support *recovery* rather than just management. This emphasis on care being about more than just moving from crisis to stability was welcome, given Forum members’ concerns about early discharge from secondary mental health services. In order to make services recovery-oriented, it is crucial that providers can create opportunities for meaningful activity for service users. This aim should inform all service-provision, from secure hospital care, local hospital care, community services, voluntary

sector and self-help. Support should be available for the realisation of goals, ambitions and opportunities — both for people and for organisations.

Janice O’Hare, the Director of Mental Health for Cumbria Partnership Trust, stated that effective, collaborative work across all organisations is important. Changes in service delivery — such as integration between Health and Social Care, the locality model for service management, investment in Primary Care (an initiative by the Partnership Trust) and Care Pathway work — should, Janice said, support this effective cross-agency work

Sue Page, the Chief Executive of Cumbria Primary Care Trust, emphasised the fact that services should be about the “right to recovery”. Her view is that service users and carers should be able to take control of their own lives. Clinicians should be able to let go of dictating the Care Plan and support people to make decisions which form their care plan. Sue also made it clear that service user and carer involvement in service development was important as well.

Experiences *Coping with Mental Health Problems*

Paul Redmayne

Since 1991, when I had a very bad accident at work, I have suffered with mental health problems. I am writing this article to tell all about my past experiences of mental health, and what I have done to try and deal with it.



‘When the sun is shining and it is warm I feel okay, knowing I can sit in my car with the windows down and feel the fresh air.’

I have had, and still do have, many, many bad days. However, on a positive note, the bad days are outnumbered by the good days. But this has taken a lot of time. Many times I have woken – and still do – to the awful thought of another day with mental health problems. But once I get up and have breakfast I feel a little more prepared for the day ahead. I try and keep myself busy, and do my tasks, which I enjoy. Part of my mental health problems are controlled by the weather. When the sun is shining and it is warm I feel okay, knowing I can sit in my car with the windows down and feel the fresh air. But when it is cold and wet I hide and want to keep myself to myself. Luckily I have some good friends who know I have mental health problems but continue to help me, and look out for me, which I think is great.

Locality Managers

During 2007 the Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust — which organises the secondary mental health services — has been planning a reorganisation of its management into six local areas. In South Cumbria, South Lakes includes Sedbergh and Kirby Lonsdale across to Kendal, Grange over Sands, Ambleside and Grasmere. The Furness area includes Barrow, Ulverston, Coniston and Millom. The list below shows the new managers. There are some vacancies which will be re-advertised.

Pete Sexton, the new Furness Locality Manager, was previously Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) manager in South Lakes, although some may remember Pete working at Danegarth in its early days. Heather Cameron was Furness CMHT manager, and will now work on the strategy for developing counselling and other services in the community

South Lakes	Locality Manager	Vacant
South Lakes	Deputy Locality Manager	Fiona Brundish
South Lakes	Adult CMHT	Vacant
South Lakes	Older Adult CMHT	Jenny Griffiths
Furness	Locality Manager	Pete Sexton
Furness	Deputy Locality Manager (OA)	Chris Moore
Furness	Adult CMHT	Anne Leyland Jones
Furness	Older Adult CMHT	Vacant
	Assertive Outreach Team (South Cumbria)	Tony Dugdale
Furness		
Cumbria-wide posts		
Primary Care	Strategic Manager	Heather Cameron
Practice and Quality	Lead	Moira McIntyre
Acute Services	Manager	Karen Holt
Social Work	Professional Head	Chris Scott

Future of Mental Health Services in Cumbria

Cumbria Primary Care Trust and Cumbria Social Care are reviewing the way mental health services work, and planning for changes in the future. There have been a number of meetings which Forum members have attended in order to provide user and carer views. Issues which need to be addressed include:

- legal restrictions of working hours, which make it virtually impossible to provide psychiatrically-trained doctors on a number of different sites
- improving the way Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment teams work to allow more services users to recover in the community
- providing more services to help people nearer to their homes and communities.

The outline ideas at present include

- retaining acute wards in both South Cumbria and North Cumbria
- strengthening the work of the crisis resolution and home treatment teams
- having accommodation across Cumbria where services users can stay for a while if they need more support. These are sometimes referred to as halfway houses.
- reducing the need for people to go out of county by increasing local provision

Cumbria Partnership Trust is also organising a service in primary care with trained staff associated with groups of GP practices.

The Forum will be organising local meetings in February to discuss these ideas. The PCT's formal consultation process runs from April to June.

"Anyone, anywhere, at any time can have mental health problems—no one is immune"

In the early days of me having mental health problems I just thought *Well, that's it for me, my life is over and done with. Just put me on the scrap heap.* After a while you begin to tell yourself you are no good. My mental health problems are to do with feelings of low self esteem, not wanting to get to know people or get involved. But you have to turn those feelings around. You are still a person – living, breathing and with feelings. It is difficult, but you have to try and fight those feelings. Sometimes it's difficult to motivate yourself but I've found that a little bit at a time eventually adds up and you start to feel good about yourself.

And so I decided to get involved with South Cumbria Mental Health User and Carer Forum – to come along to one of the meetings. The staff are very friendly. We all have different experiences of mental health. The meetings are informal, and it's good to share how we feel. We only have one life: let's be happy and sociable.

Paul Redmayne

Many thanks to Paul for sharing his story.

If you would like to share your experience of mental health problems in our next newsletter we'd love to hear from you. Contact Vicky, Lucy or Wendy.

Funding for Talking Therapies

The government has announced a major funding boost for psychological therapies nationwide. By 2010 it is proposed that £170m a year will be spent - which will hugely increase access to therapy.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is thought to be as effective a means of treating depression and anxiety as prescription drugs. The National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence NICE recommends that in many cases CBT is preferable to prescription medication.

At present, patients can wait up to 18 months to begin therapy. The new funding is aimed to reduce this waiting time to just a fortnight and will allow 900,000 more people to be treated.

This is great news for service users as it shows that the government are working towards improving understanding of mental health issues and offering patients a real choice of treatments. The forum is delighted with this news and hopes to see the benefits of this initiative in the local mental health community.

“ More than one in six people suffer from mental health problems at any one time. For many people prescribing medication is a successful treatment but we know that psychological therapies work equally well. ”

Alan Johnson—Health Secretary

In Cumbria this funding for talking therapies is likely to be directed towards the independent sector but linked in carefully with primary mental health services. Gp's involved in commissioning are suggesting that the allocation reflects local need.



If you would like to share your views on talking therapies for inclusion in our next newsletter please get in touch! Contact Vicky at the Barrow Office 01229 827870 or email Victoria.dean@scmhforum.org.uk

Early discharge to GPs

Many service users and carers are concerned that people are being discharged from secondary care sooner than they have been in the past. We are aware of people's serious concerns about this, and so the Forum has raised this issue with Janice O'Hare, director of Mental Health for the Partnership Trust, and with Richard Parry, head of Disability Services for Cumbria County Council Social Care Directorate. They have now replied to our letters. Their reply stated that:

- it is national policy that patients are discharged back to the care of their GPs once active treatment has been concluded and presenting problems resolved. Because this has not been happening in many parts of the country, Cumbria included, a dependency on secondary care mental health services has developed which does not promote people's independence and recovery
- following the publication of a new document by the Royal College of Psychiatrists — *New ways of working for psychiatrists* — the “job plan” for consultants with specialisms in the acute care areas (such as in-patients, crisis resolution and assertive outreach) is changing. Under the new guidelines, these specialist consultants will see those individuals whose needs are a priority at any point in time. It will be part of the Care Co-ordinators' role to access appointments with a consultant psychiatrist when an individual needs it. In South Cumbria those specialists are: Dr Tony Page, in-patient care; Dr Miriam Naheed, crisis resolution and home treatment; Dr Avic Simpson, assertive outreach; Dr Pat Thomas, inpatients at Kentmere and community work across South Lakeland and parts of Furness. Dr Karen Johl also contributes to crisis resolution and home treatment in Kendal, while Dr Corinne Lewis supports early intervention in both South and North Cumbria.

The Forum remains very aware that many service users and carers across the county still have concerns about the way in which the service is working. It is crucial that people can easily re-access services if they need to. We are also concerned about how the implementation of this new national guidance will impact on recovery, and on the service users and carers receive in general. We will take these issues up with managers.

Workbase has moved!

Workbase, a social enterprise set up to aid the recovery of users of mental health services, has moved to new premises on Kendal Business Park (behind the Auction Mart). We have taken a unit that will give us more space, allow us to continue to develop the business and be fully accessible to anyone with mobility problems.

Thanks to the generosity of mainly local funders (and in particular, the Frieda Scott Trust) we have been able to adapt the property. We moved in December 2007.

We will continue to provide opportunities for service users to work voluntarily in our desk top publishing, printing, copying, collating and craft business, but we also expect to be able to add catering, housekeeping and gardening as time goes on. We intend to create a kitchen that will be used for training purposes, we will be renting out surplus office space, and there is a small patch of ground behind the building that needs landscaping and maintaining.

Would you like to:

Participate in a programme of rehabilitation that will boost your self confidence and could lead to paid work, training or volunteering?

Become a volunteer in our new Reception area?

Do you know anyone who might like to join the Workbase team?

Or do you know of another charity, working particularly in the field of mental health, which is looking for office space?

For further information contact Workbase: Tel: 01539 736786

Email: jane@kendal85.fsnet.co.uk

www.workbase-kendal.co.uk

Cognitive behavioural Therapy: The Facts

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is a psychological treatment for mental health conditions. Treatment usually takes between 8 and 20 sessions.

It is a combination of cognitive therapy, which can modify or eliminate your unwanted thoughts and beliefs, and behavioural therapy, which can help you to your change behaviour in response to those thoughts.

Cognitive techniques (such as challenging negative thoughts) and behavioural techniques (such as exposure therapy that gradually desensitises you to your phobia and relaxation techniques) are used to relieve symptoms of [anxiety](#) and [depression](#) by changing your thoughts, beliefs and behaviour.

CBT is based on the assumption that most unwanted thinking patterns and emotional and behavioural reactions are learned over a long period of time. The aim is to identify the thinking that is causing your unwanted feelings and behaviours and to learn to replace this thinking with more positive thoughts.

The therapist does not focus on the events from your past (such as your childhood) but focuses on current difficulties at the present time. The therapist will be able to teach you new skills and new ways of reacting.

CBT can be used alone or in conjunction with medication. This depends on your condition and its severity.

Department of Health guidelines support CBT for conditions such as depressive disorders, panic disorder, agoraphobia, generalised anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, bulimia, and [chronic fatigue](#) (1) A number of professionals use CBT, including clinical psychologists, occupational therapists, [psychiatrists](#), nurses, counsellors, and social workers. It is practised by clinical psychologists within the NHS, although this is not available everywhere and tends to vary across the UK. Many private therapists use CBT; the British Association of Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies (BABCP) and the UK Council for [Psychotherapy](#) (UKCP) hold registers of accredited practitioners. *Factsheet: NHS Direct 2007*

Lucy Crispin

I'm glad to be able to introduce myself as the Forum's new Development Worker based in Kendal. I started work here at the end of August and am settling into my new role. I'm enjoying getting out and about meeting service users and carers across the South Cumbria area, and finding out what matters to you. With my background as a lecturer, I'm also enjoying supporting Forum members to develop our contribution to training social workers, junior doctors and other service providers: you all have expertise about the mental health services, and this is another way you can share your experiences.



You can talk to me at the office, at the bi-monthly Forum meetings, and at:

Kendal MIND on the first Monday in the month 1:00-2:30

Grange MIND on the third Monday 1:30-3:30

Windermere MIND on the last Friday in the month, 11:30-1

Apart from my work at the Forum, I'm a trained and practising counsellor. I currently volunteer as a counsellor at MIND in Kendal as well as having my own private practice. I have also worked at MIND in Kendal and Ulverston running writing courses: as a poet, I enjoy creative activities of all kinds. I'd like to develop a section of this newsletter where service users and carers can share their creative writing, so if there are any poems or short stories lurking in your desk then please get in touch! It's always good to see your work in print.

One of our members from West Cumbria, Emily Prier, has got the ball rolling by contributing a poem to this issue, which she wrote during a workshop at the User and Carer Event at Rheged in September. Thank you for sharing your work, Emily. There's another poem by a Forum member later in the newsletter too.

Poetry

I saw an ocean liner in the desert.

The people on board were looking puzzled and distraught. "Where are the dolphins, the whales and fish? All we can see is more and more sand."

It would come as no surprise to see a camel pass by, just going about his business on an ordinary day.

The captain is calling "sand dune dead ahead."

I think of Titanic and icebergs instead. All of a sudden the desert seems safe, Less dangers here than on the wide open sea!

Emily Prier

Watch this space...

Lucy is currently talking with members of Workbase about an exciting new project which the Forum and Workbase might undertake together. The planned project would allow Forum members, and any interested users or carers, to take part in free, guided workshops in the visual arts and in creative writing. Lucy hopes to have more information about it by the time of the next Kendal Forum meeting — Monday 11 February — but in the meantime, if anyone thinks they might be interested, please contact Lucy and she'll take your name and contact you when she knows more.